

## IDEAS 5 (Set 2)

### Analysis: Lit - Baca. Always Here

#### SUMMARY/ABSTRACT:

This paper shows a strong depth of understanding, with a few key nuances introduced. The position is *mostly* substantiated, but the general weakness of the position (as stated in that strand's Standard Bearer analysis) prevents this from earning a 6. In addition, while the ideas presented have a few moments of genuine nuance and insight (although not always explained), overall there is not a clear sense of insightful, strong depth of understanding.

#### CRITERION 1: QUALITY

There are two ideas in this paper that are particularly nuanced, and perhaps insightful:

In the second half of the first body paragraph, the writer connects several nuanced, subtly linked ideas. First, she presents the overall concept that “love makes you aware that you belong” and that the author illustrates this by including imagery that “soothes” us. She then offers us a piece of evidence from the poem about a warm fire, and give us this interpretation:

The image of the fire, hearing it cracking, and smelling the wood burning lets you know how safe you are, and how much you belong there. The author intentionally placed this image in the poem to help the individual reading experience that warm sensation. This is exhibiting how love places you out of harm's way and makes you want to stay, as if you belong.

That subtle string of ideas, evidence, and interpretation—love makes you aware that you belong; familiar things soothe us; a fire makes you feel warm and like you belong; feeling like you belong makes you feel loved—is certainly nuanced, intentional, and accurate.

In addition, in the same paragraph the writer compares the warm, bright corn to the “dull white outside,” concluding that the reader must feel a “tender, secure sense of protection.” This comparison shows nuanced thinking.

In the second body paragraph, the author presents an ambitious (if not flawless) argument about the effect of alliteration on the paragraph; namely, he argues that the hard “c” sound of “the cold cannot bite through” is protective or strong, which is connected to this idea of love. While not as smoothly argued and connected back to the main thesis as the first bullet point, it's certainly a nuanced, sophisticated understanding of a poem that deserves commendation.

However, this paper does not push to a six because the ideas in the paper (in particular, the misinterpretation in the third paragraph around the hogan as “permanent” and the scarf as “intense”) do not push to the threshold of insightful (clear, critical and complex ideas that are outside of the scope of class discussion). As teachers and humanity experts, we see clearly that this student strongly *understands* the text and the discussion in class. However, we must grade on how well students *communicate* their understanding of the text and ideas, and use this ability to develop *new and original* ideas (outside of what the teacher has taught).

## **CRITERION 2: SUBSTANTIATION**

There are not necessarily any opposing arguments that are necessary to address in this paper. However, while the position is mostly substantiated, the weakness of the thesis statement itself prevents the paper from scoring a 6 in ideas. With such a weak thesis statement, it's impossible to say that the position is *strongly* substantiated. The position itself is not strong enough or clear enough to be strongly substantiated.

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### **Essay: Lit - Baca. Always Here**

*Essay #2*

*Prompt: How does the author use poetic devices to illuminate the theme of the poem?*

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#### Always Here

Love is knowing someone cares and will always be there. Moreover, it is that warm feeling you get when your loved one embraces you. However, it doesn't have to be based on a relationship, it can be based on a mother and daughter connection. For many humans love is a deeper connection that we are all looking for in life. In I Am Offering This Poem, by Jimmy Santiago Baca, the poet is giving the idea that love is providing you with all that you need, for example guidance and comfort. When in love, humans tend to feel safe and as if they belong, knowing there is someone that's always there that cares for them. Love is not something humans can just dispose of: it most likely will always be there.

The idea that love makes you feel safe and as if you belong is conveyed by the author's use of imagery. Throughout the poem, the poet helps express the idea of feeling safe by letting us see, taste, and smell what satisfies us. Baca states in the third stanza, "it is a pot full of yellow corn/ to warm your belly in the winter" (9-10). The comforting smell of corn helps to create the thought of feeling calm, warm, and replete. Moreover, when the composer talks about the bright color he is comparing it to the dull white outside. This image is purposely created to help the reader feel that tender, secure sensation of protection. This is illustrating how love makes you feel safe and comfortable. In the fifth stanza, the author is portrays the idea that love makes you aware that you belong. He does this by allowing us to feel, see, hear, and smell what soothes us. Baca states, "and let you warm yourself by this fire/rest by this fire, and make you feel safe" (21-22). The warmth of the fire makes you want to be there. The image of the fire, hearing it cracking, and smelling the wood burning lets you know how safe you are, and how much you belong there. The author intentionally placed this image in the poem to help the individual reading experience that warm sensation. This is exhibiting how love places you out of harm's way and makes you want to stay, as if you belong. All in all, this portrays the idea that the author's use of imagery conveys that love makes you feel safe and as if you belong.

Love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to protect and care for you is illustrated by the poet's use of sound devices. At some point in the poem, the artist provokes the idea of feeling protected by using alliteration. Baca states in the first stanza, "the cold cannot bite through" (6). The hard "c" sound is putting an end to something. It's showing that every bad thing that is being done

to them will not bring them down. The composer purposely created this use of the alliteration because he wants to express to the reader that he will protect them from everything that's trying to bring them down. This is showing how love can protect you from oppression. In the seventh stanza, the author perpetuates the idea that love is also knowing that there is someone that always cares for you. He suggests this by using a rhyme scheme. Baca states, "and to go on living inside/ when the world outside/ no longer cares if you live or die" (26-28). The rhyme scheme was intentionally placed in this poem to show how harsh reality really is, but knowing there is someone you can always count on to be there for you. This is displaying the idea that love is being aware that somebody until the end of time will care for you. In conclusion, this conveys the idea that the author's use of sound devices illustrates that love is knowing that there is that one person who will always be there to guard you and care for you.

The speaker's employment of figurative language produces the idea that love is feeling sheltered, and not something that you can just dispose of. In the third stanza, the poet conveys his idea that love's warmth makes you feel protected by the use of a metaphor. Baca states, "it is a scarf for your head, to wear/over your hair, to tie up around your face" (11-12). The author is comparing the scarf's intensity to his love, and power to make you feel protected. His love is warmhearted, which means he can make you feel sheltered. In the fifth stanza, the author is expressing the idea that love is not something you can throw away by the use of a simile. Baca states, "tucked away like a cabin or a hogan." (6) The artist is contrasting a hidden cabin in the forest to how his love is not something that will just go away. The author intended this simile to show how much he cares, and to let the reader know he is always there. This is showing that love is something you can save but not something you can dispose of. All in all, this illustrates the idea that the author's use of figurative language shows that love creates a feeling of being sheltered, and not something that you can just toss away.

Throughout the poem, the poet continues to illustrate the idea of humans tending to feel secure and as if you belong, knowing there is someone that always cares. The composer demonstrates this by employing imagery, sound devices and figurative language. Having realized this about life, humans learned that without knowing that there is someone that's always there to pick you up when you're down. In conclusion, humans may realize how deep and important love really is.